

Discovery of Living Buddhism in Bengal.

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DISCOVERY OF LIVING BUDDHISM IN BENGAL.

Eastern India was the great stronghold of Buddhism. It had its origin in Eastern India, it developed in Eastern India, and it lingered longest in Eastern India. The Bhiksus of Eastern India carried the religion of Çākya Simha to Ceylon, to China, to the Eastern Archipelago, to Farther India, to Tibet, and even to Mongolia. The best Buddhist works were mostly written in Eastern India, and Eastern India contained the four great places of pilgrimage for the whole of the Buddhist world. Yet it is confidently asserted that for the last three or four centuries there has not been even a single votary of that religion in the whole of the Provinces of Bengal, Bihār, and Uḍḍiyā. nay, even in the whole of India. All the great places of pilgrimage are in shapeless ruins. Buddhist religious terms have disappeared from the language of the people. Not a single Buddhist MS. has been found even after a careful search of thirty years. The name of Buddha is, of course, known but as the ninth incarnation Viṣṇu. The names of his followers and his doctrines are absolutely unknown. The title of his doctrine that is known, is known from the works, now little studied, of Nai-yáyikas who wrote treatises to refute them. In Eastern India itself the previous existence of Buddhism had to be discovered by the antiquarian zeal of European Orientalists.

It is said that the expulsion of Buddhism was complete. But can this ever be a fact that the religion which counted its votaries by the million should altogether disappear from the soil of its birth and the scenes of its greatest power and influence? One is not disposed to believe such a thing. And the

question whether there are Buddhists still in Eastern India is considered to be well worth investigation. The investigation naturally falls under two heads, namely, that of examining step by step, the downward movement of Buddhism from the time of Hioun Tsang till we lose all trace of it in the literature and architecture of Eastern India, and that of examining the various forms of worship prevailing in that part of the country with the view of identifying any one of them with any one of the various forms of Buddhist worship. For the first, there have been collected ample materials in the shape of MSS, inscriptions, statues, and Archæological Reports; but for the latter, the investigator is left to his own resources.

In the cities between Mungfir and the sea, visited by Hioun Tsang during the first half of the seventh century, there were altogether 97 Sanghārāmas or Monasteries with 11,500 priests, while the number of Deva-Temples was 442. If the word priest means a bhiksu, as it evidently does, at least one hundred families would be required to support a single bhiksu for a year, and so there were at least 11,50,000 families to support such a large body of priests. This means a population of nearly a crore. The existence of 442 Deva-Temples gives us no idea of the number of the Brāhmanic population, because a temple may be supported by a single family.

Hioun Tsang speaks only of cities. Eight or nine cities had a crore of Buddhist population. The country must have had many millions. And so the Buddhist religion may still be said to have been in a flourishing condition, though its rival was at the same time gaining in power and influence.

The Guptas of Magadha who ruled in the seventh and the eighth century were Buddhists, and their rule was not unfavourable to the prospects of the Buddhist religion. Again, by the end of the ninth century the Pālas came to power, in Magadha. These encouraged Buddhism to a great extent. The Monastery of Vikrama Cīla rose to great influence during their ascendancy and they conquered the greater portion of Bengal. Dīpankara bhiksu converted Tibet, and a very large number of Pandita bhiksus was employed in translating Sanskrit MSS. into

Tibetan. The bhiksus of Vikrama Çlla wrote many commentaries; of which those on the *Sragdharāstotra* and on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Buddhakapālatantra* are the chief. There are numerous MSS. written about this period preserved in the monasteries in Nepal, taken there, most likely, by fugitives flying away from the Musalman conquerors. These and similar circumstances show that Buddhism was still a living religion, during the whole period. The Pāla Kings held their sway in Magadha. In Bengal their rule came to an end by the middle of the Eleventh Century and their successors in that country were Hindus who did not like the Buddhists. But even during their rule Buddhist MSS. were written and Bauddha temples flourished.

But by the end of the Twelfth Century the Pālas and Senas were involved in one common ruin by the invasion of the Musalmans, who massacred a very large number of Buddhist priests at Odantapuri, the capital of Magadha. Buddhism was about this time suppressed by fire and sword. But it still lingered in Eastern India. I have elsewhere written :—

“But there were traces of Buddhism lately (even after the Muhammadan invasion). A Kāyastha belonging to Magadha copied a Buddhist MSS. in 1446. The MS. is now at Cambridge. That shows signs of lingering Buddhism. Dr. Hoey has discovered an inscription at Mahet, dated 1219 A. D., dedicating a temple to Buddha. Buddhist monks were still at Gayā so late as 1331 A.D. The Bodh-Gayā temple was repaired by a king of Arakan in 1305. A biographer of Caitanya named Cuḍāmanidāsa mentions Buddhists as rejoicing at the birth of Caitanya. One of the great millionaires of Sāṅgāon in Caitanya's time belonging to the sonārbaniā caste refuses to accept Vaisnavism on the ground that he would not like to be saved when the whole world round him was plunged in misery. This is a pure Buddhist sentiment absolutely unknown to the Hindus. Çulapāni, writing after the Muhammadan conquest, makes the very sight of a Buddhist an occasion for performing expiatory ceremonies. The word of the text he quotes is *Nagna* or naked, which he explains as “Bauddhādayah. How could he explain that word in that way if there were no Buddhists in his country?”

Since writing the above many proofs have been obtained to show that Buddhism lingered in Eastern India.

There is a palm leaf MS. in the Mahārājā's Library at Khatmandu being No. 85. This was copied by two Gauḍadeśyopāsakas, or lay Buddhists belonging to Bengal in the year 1818 after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha. And there are many Buddhist Tāntrik works in that Library written in the Bengali or in the Maithili hand. Professor Bendall speaks of a copy of the *Çikṣāsaumuccaya* in the Cambridge Library written in a Bengali hand of the 14th century.

A Maithili MS. of the commentary of the *Prajñāpāramitā* portion of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is to be found in the Asiatic Society's collections. This is in a character four to five hundred years old.

A Bengali Brāhmana converted to Buddhism and persecuted at home went to Ceylon where Parākramavāhu made him the Supervisor of the Bauddha religious establishments, *Buddhāgamacakravartī*. Pandit Silaskandha of Ceylon says that this Parākramavāhu belonged to the thirteenth century, nearly fifty years after the Muhammadan conquest. The Commentator says that this Brāhman was born in Vīravatī in the Vārendra Country in Bengal. This shows that in that part of Bengal, Buddhism was a living religion in the 13th century, to such an extent that it could attract even learned Brāhmanas, for this Brāhmana, Rāmacandra Kavibhārati, was a poet, a grammarian, and a rhetorician.

These facts show that long after the Muhammadan conquest in spite of the rivalry of Brāhmanas and the wholesale massacre by Musalmans, Buddhists still continued to exist in Bengal, Magadha, and Mithilā.

The Vajrāsan at Gayā continued to be visited by pilgrims from various parts of the world. A Nepalese from Lalitapattan made a pilgrimage to Gayā and lived there for three years, about 1585. On his return home he erected a vihāra and named it Mahābodhi Vihār. Its style differs from that of all other Vihāras in Nepāl and is said to have been copied from one near Gayā.

The Teshu Lama sent an Embassy in 1777 to the Vajrásan and paid his respects to it by proxy. The Burmese visited it so late as 1809 and 1823.

In the MS., No. 3582 belonging to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, of a work entitled the *Decāvalivivriti* there is evidence of the existence of Buddhism and Buddhist tradition. In the first 11 leaves is given an account of Pātaliputra or Pattana city by Jaganmohan, a pandit learned in various Cāstras, and a great traveller, at the command of Vaijala Bhūpati, the Chauhān proprietor of four parganas about the city of Patna. Vaijala died in the Samvat year 1570. Cāke Saptatīvanacandraganite Vikramasya ca Jāhnavātināstre Mrto Vaijala Bhūpati. He lived at a time of confusion and made a small semi-independent principality for himself, but his kingdom was destroyed shortly after his death. These eleven leaves appear to be the genuine work of Jaganmohan. The rest of the work was re-edited from torn MS. and from traditions by a Pandit after some lapse of time. Jaganmohan mentions that Sugatichandra, the King of Mahendrāditya, a worshipper of Buddha, conquered Patna and many other cities. His Queen Hansagadā was a devoted worshipper of Buddha. He conquered not only the whole of Eastern India but Cina, Laghucina, and other countries and islands. He established a Buddhist Matha at Amara on the Irāvati. He conquered Dharmapura, the Capital of Yogī Pandita in Bengal, who was a son of Mahādeva. After making all these conquests and paying his respects to all the various shrines, he went to his country in the West. Jaganmohan mentions many Buddhist rites and ceremonies, but they have all been taken from the Hindu Tantras; of genuine Buddhist works he appears to know very little.

Jaganmohan also says that after the incarnation of Buddha there was a king, Sucandra or Bhūcandra, by name, who established many cities in Magadha. Old traditions still lingered in the birthplace of Buddhism.

The most important piece of information about the existence of Buddhism in India in the seventeenth century has been obtained from Tibet; and Dr. Waddell has laid Buddhist scholars under very great obligation by publishing an abstract of the wanderings of Buddhagupta Nātha in India about the year 1608.

I give an extract :-

"Thence i.e. from Sambudha he went to Bhangala *via* Jagannátha and Trilinga. Thence to Pundavarta *gavasadni* from which in twenty days he reached the shrines of ~~Kasramagaram~~ and Devikota in the upper part of Tripura where he remained in the monastery formerly built by the great Siddhi Krishnakar. He also visited Haribhanja, Phukhrad and Palgru. In these countries the clergy and holy books were numerous and the religion prosperous. While there he heard a variety of esoteric teachings from the life of a great Pandit named Dharma of the Haribhanja Chaitya believed to be a pupil of the Great Siddhi——and also found a Pandit *Upásiká* named Hetagarbaghanna. He also learned here the original authorities of many of the *Sútras*. Then he visited the Chaitya, and he saw the magic circles of Janakaya and Siddhanyakadaka." Buddhagupta Nátha made also a pilgrimage to Mahábodhi and the Vajrásan: he lived in the neighbourhood of Gayá for several years.

"On returning to India proper Buddhagupta visited Trilinga Vidyánagara Karnadaka (Karnatic) and Bhamdva. At the latter place he met the great Siddha Sátagupta. Henceforth the pilgrim Buddhagupta is known as Buddhagupta Nátha. He was especially empowered by the Yogini Dinakara and Great Guru Gambhiramati. And he had taken instructions from the Superiors (Skt. *Uttara*) Sudhigarbya, Gantapa, Betatikshana, Bhirabandhu and Ghaghapa, all of whom were followers of the aforesaid great siddhi Sátagupta. He then went to the Mahábodhi in the Middle Country and made a small house for meditation close to the north of the Vajrásana. Afterwards he visited the eight great shrines and the Gridhrakútagiriguha and Prayága. Forty-six years had now elapsed since his last meeting with Tírthi Nátha. Then he built an assembly house on Khagendiri hill to which many Yogis resorted, and he received Royal patronage."

This shows that in some out of the way corner of Bengal and in Magadha pilgrims found Buddhism of some sort still flourishing.

This was at the beginning of the Seventeenth Century but we have some very curious information about Buddhism in India in the beginning of the Eighteenth Century. This is from a work entitled *Buddhacaritra*. I got a mutilated copy of a part of the work from Pandit Vindhyeçvarīprasād Dube of Benares, and there is a copy of another part of the work in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. It was written in Benares by one Nāthurām who as a Buddhist mendicant took the name of Nathamala Brahmachārī. The whole work was compiled in 12 years from 1755 to 1767 Samvat and is said to contain 1250,00,000 ślokas. (?) It says that Buddha was to incarnate himself at Balarikāçrama on the 8th of Māgha in the year 1755 Samvat; and that the five great gods Visnu, Çiva, Ganapati, Çakti and Sūryya came to Nathamal on the 5th and asked him to write *Mukhabhākhā Grantha*, the same designated *Buddhacaritra* here, to celebrate the advent of Buddha and the reappearance of Satyayuga in the midst of the Kaliyuga. The author knows nothing of Buddha and Buddhism but knows him only as an incarnation of Visnu. He preaches peace to all living creatures, deploras the imposition of Zizia on the Hindus, mentions Aurangzeb and his rule, praises Akbar who is said to have reigned for 91 years. The portion found in the Society's Library, *Buddhacaritra* B 66, contains an account of fighting between Buddha and a large number of Daityas belonging to various countries, the name of Çurasen appearing very prominent among them. The language is a curious medley of bad Sanskrit, bad Hindi, and bad Bihārī. There is rarely a complete sentence, but the work professes to teach all sciences. Samvat 1755 is 1699 A. D. The work began in that year and was completed in 1711. Nathamala employed four students, whose names he gives, to write out this voluminous work, under his own superintendence. This work appears to be Buddhistic only in name. The author did not live at the Rsiptana or Sárnāth, perhaps he did not even know its name. He lived where others lived. He mentions Khālispurā, Rāmāpurā and the Ghāt dedicated to 64 yogins and so on. The name only of Buddha survives in this work.

I think it would not be out of place to mention here that Buddhism lost

its hold on the people of India, not so much because its enemies were powerful, but also on account of its own weakness. The word *bhiksu*, in later days, was a byword of reproach, and the idea that the Buddhists were extremely sensual and licentious had been gaining ground in India for a long time. Many sects arose in the bosom of Bauddhdom itself which openly sympathised with the Saivayits and others. The Náthas or saints arose in India and Nepal about the 14th century, who were revered both by Hindus and Buddhists. In page 394 Vol. XVIII Journal R. A. S. old series, Brian Hodgson says that Náthism or saintism was the bridge uniting the orthodox and the heterodox, the Bráhmancial and the Saugata sects. The Náthas were said to have been possessed of supernatural powers. They were not much attached to any creed. They had their own followers who worshipped them as Gurus and considered them identical with the supreme deity. The Bráhmanas shunned them as much as they shunned any man belonging to any heretical sect. But they had immense influence among the other castes, specially those outside the pale of Orthodox Society *i. e.*, those people whose water the Bráhmanas did not accept. Though there were fourteen or fifteen great Náthas, the number of minor Náthas was very large. In Bengal an entire section of the *yogi* caste call themselves Náthas, and those were anxious some years ago to assume the holy thread and become Bráhmanas *i. e.*, made an unconscious effort to regain their religious supremacy. The story of the traveller Buddhagupta becoming a *Nátha* has been given above. An investigation as regards the position of these Náthas in India would be of invaluable use to the student who interests himself in the history of the changes which brought about the present state of religious, social, and moral life of India. The Hindu Tantras are replete with Buddhist ideas and Buddhist words, and some of the rites and ceremonies prescribed therein are purely Buddhistic; though this is not Buddhism of the purest kind.

I may now conclude the first part of my enquiry with the observation that there are many points in this which require clearing up and that there are others which are in a very unsatisfactory state of progress.

As regards the second point, there is a curious form of worship prevalent in the Western and Southern part of Bengal among the very lowest classes of the so called Hindus which appears to me to be worthy of investigation. The feature that strikes me is that the worshippers rarely, if ever, accept the ministration of Bráhmaṇas. The Domas, the Pods, the Hádís all those who are regarded with abomination by Bráhmaṇas are the priests of this worship. The formulæ of worship are sometimes in Bengali and sometimes in Sanskrit both equally ungrammatical. Hogs, ducks, and fowl are often sacrificed before the deity. There is a vast body of literature belonging to this form of worship much of which remains yet unexplored. They have their processions sometimes on a fixed day in the year, sometimes any time after due notice. The priest never insists upon daily worship, though arrangement for daily worship has been made in many places. They administer certain medicines as specifics, as the special gift of the deity, and the relieved patients make their votive offerings. The deity is sometimes worshipped in temples, sometimes under trees, and sometimes in the open air. Sometimes an image, sometimes a piece of stone covered with vermilion, and sometimes an earthen pot filled with water represent the deity. *Túps* or brass or silver nails driven through the stone is a principal feature. The nail-heads represent as they say the eye of the deity. The paraphernalia of worship has been taken from the Bráhmaṇas as a rule: There is the meditation of the deity, the bathing of the deity, the offering of flowers, edible, water, and sandal-paste; oil and vermilion form the only exceptions. The deity is generally placed facing the east, while among the Hindus the priest generally faces the east and the north, the deity facing south and west. Almost every village west of the river Hugli has one or two places of worship. At the time of a festival they can multiply the places of worship, as the worship is often conducted in the open air. Hindus, nay, even the worshippers of this deity themselves, believe that he is either a form of Visnu or a form of Çiva. But in their books he is much above them. He is the Supreme Deity, the creator of the Hindu Trinity. The name of the deity is Dharma Thákur; he is also called Dharma Rájá or Dharma Ráya; he goes by different names in different places.

LITERATURE OF THE DHARMA WORSHIP.

In the year 1884, Babu Jogendra Nátha Basu, the editor of the *Bangavási* Newspaper published a work entitled *Dharma Mangal*, or the auspicious celebration of Dharma worship. The author was Ghanarám, a native of the Burdwan District, who wrote his work under the patronage of the Burdwan Raj family in the year 1710 (A.D.). The author was a low Bráhmaṇ, who officiated in religious ceremonies of the Candálas. The story differed widely from that of the ordinary run of the works in ancient Bengali. In that book itself there is a statement that the story was derived from *Hákanda Purána*, and that the first poet who wrote on the subject was Mayúra Bhatta. But since then by personal enquiries I have come to know that there are others who have also written on the subject. Rúpárám is a poet whose work is very popular in the south of Calcutta. Mánik candra Ganguli's work was obtained from Midnapore. Rám candra Banerji is also well known in that part of the country. *Kheláráma* is mentioned in the work entitled *Bengali Language and Literature* by Babu Dineç candra Sen. The works of all these writers treat of the same story with slight variations and alterations. But, above all, is the work of Rámái Pandit, the first great priest of the Dharma worship. His *paddhati* (liturgy) is followed in many parts of Bengal. Rámái was a Báiti by caste. The Báitis are low people who live by making mats and beating drums. This is all the literature on the subject known to me. But I have often heard people speak of a *Dharmapurána*. This is neither the *Dharmapurána* in Sanskrit noticed by Rájá Rájendralála Mitra, nor the *Vrhat Dharmapurána* which is under publication for the *Bibliotheca Indica*, but must be some Bengali *Purána* in honor of Dharma. Of the works on Dharma I have got the printed edition of Ghanarám, Mánik Ganguli's work, a portion of Rámái Pandit's *Paddhati*, and a fragment of Rúpáráma's work. I expect to get the others very soon.

ITS ANTIQUITY.

Ghanarám says that the deity Dharma made himself known during the reign of the son of King Dharma Pála, and I fancy that this Dharma Pála was

the second king of the Pála Dynasty. His capital was Gouja. The Pálas though they held their Court in Magadha always called themselves Gaudevara. The scenes in the story embrace the whole of Eastern India from Kalinga to Kámarúpa. The principal cities were ruled not by Bráhmaṇas, Káyaśthas, or Vaidyas but by Báruis, Gopas and so on, thus testifying to a state of things before the ascendancy of the Bráhmaṇas. The story, in common with all religious works in ancient Bengal, begins with a scene in Heaven, in a council-chamber of the deity most anxious for the spread of his worship and busy in devising means for the accomplishment of his object. This is the type of our ancient religious poetry. We find this in Candí, in Manasá, and even in the Rámáyana.

MA'NIK GANGULI'S WORK.

Mánik Ganguli was perhaps the first good Bráhmaṇa who undertook to write on Dharma. A Hindu, writing on Buddhism, is not unknown in Sanskrit Literature. Ksemendra, the Kaçmírian Hindu poet, wrote the Bodhisattvávadánakalpalatá at the request of his Buddhist friend Nyakka, and Kalpalatá is now a standard work of the Buddhists in Tibet. Similarly Mánik Ganguli, a Nyáya student, a Bráhmaṇa, a Kulína, belonging to the Báṅgál Mela, was requested by Dharma in person in the disguise of a Bráhmaṇa to write a poem in honour of himself. The passage in Mánik's work is :—

নিজ বীজ মদ্র লিখি দিলেন নকল ।

ইহা দেখি কবিতা রচিলে অবিকল ॥

গায়েন হ'বেন তোর চতুর্থ সোদর

জগত ভরিয়া যশ হবেক বিস্তর ।

"He, Dharma, wrote out the formula of his worship and gave it to him. Do write a poem in strict accordance with this, he said. Your fourth brother will be your musician and your fame will spread all over the world."

It must be premised here that Dharma manifested himself before Mánik while the latter was going to join his Nyáya College at Tungáđi, on the road

by the side of a tank. Mánik was naturally very much surprised, for Bráhmaṇas think such work to be very degrading. He hesitated but Dharma said :—

আমি যার সহায় এতেক ভয় কেন ?

ময়ূর ভট্টের কথা মন দিয়া শুন ।

বৈকুণ্ঠে রেখেছি তারে বিষ্ণু ভক্তি দিয়া

অদ্যাপি অপার যশ অখিল ভরিয়া ॥

Why do you fear when I am to protect you. Hear with attention all about Mayūra Bhatta, I have supplied him with a spirit of devotion to Visnu and settled him in Vaikuntha. His fame unfathomable fills the world.

So much importunity from a deity, however lowly, induced Mánik to undertake the work.

THE FORMULA OF MEDITATION.

In the Indian process of worship, the formula of Meditation plays an important part. After the worshipper is seated, and his seat, the elements surrounding him and the portion of the earth supporting him, have been propitiated and the minor gods appeased, he takes a flower, puts it in the hollow of his left palm and covers it with the hollow of the right one, and with his eyes closed he meditates on the principal deity to be worshipped. Meditation means an attempt to bring before his mental vision the form of the deity as given in the formula of meditation. This is called Dhyán and the formula, Dhyánamantra or simply Dhyána. The formula of meditation among the Hindus is given always and without exception in Sanskrit. But the Dharma Dhyána may be either in Sanskrit or in Bengali. The Sanskrit Mantra runs thus :—

যক্ষানী নাহিন্দ্রী ন চ করবর্য নাহি জায়নিদান

নাকার নাহিহর্য নাহি জন্ম ন দস্য ।

যীর্ষীন্দ্রী জ্ঞানগম্বী সত্যজ্ঞানগত সর্বস্বীকীকনাহন

তস্মৈ নমঃ নিরঞ্জন সরস্বতী পাতু নঃ যক্ষমূর্তিঃ ।

"He has no beginning, no end, and no middle; neither hands nor legs; nor the germ of the body. He is the Lord of *Fogis*, approachable only by knowledge, pervading all men, and Lord of all the worlds, the first principle without taint. O giver of boons to men, let that deity who is the same as *Ćúnya*, or void protect us."

This I obtained from an illiterate Dharma priest at *Ćuogácchi* in the Burdwan District and I give it just as I heard it. The lower classes all repeat this formula without much alteration.

I have got a more grammatical version of the formula from a learned *Bráhmāna* near the *Rájbádh* station on the East Indian Railway. It may be asked how a *Bráhmāna* can be a worshipper of Dharma. This will be determined afterwards. His version is:—

यस्यास्ती नादिमध्यो न च करचरणी नास्ति कायो नी नादः

नाकारो नैव रूपं न च भयमरणे नास्ति जन्मानि यस्य ।

योगीन्द्रैर्ध्यानगम्यं सकलजनमयं सर्वलोकेष्वनाथम्

भक्तानां कामपूर्व सुरनरवरदं चिन्तयेत् शन्यमूर्तिम् ।

"He, who has neither beginning, nor end, nor middle, neither hands nor legs; neither body nor voice, neither form nor colour; neither fear nor death, nor birth; he who is approachable by the great Yogis, pervading all men, the Lord of all the various worlds, he who fulfils the desires of his votaries and grants boons to gods and men alike, that deity in the form of a void should be meditated."

This formula also is not perfectly grammatical. The word *Ćúnyamúrtti* points to a Buddhistic origin of the deity. The Hindus never believed in *Ćúnya* as the origin of the world, while *Ćúnyatá* and *Maháćunyatá* are the great goals of the Buddhist religion.

The Bengali Formula is this :—

বর্ণ যুগপতি সর্ব গুণধাম ।

শুন শুন সর্বজন যুগের বিধান ॥

যে দিনেতে ভূদ্বীভার আছিল মণ্ডলে । অদ্য বাহুকী নাগের জন্ম সেই কালে ॥

ষোড় করিয়া নাগে জিজ্ঞাসে বারতা । এক মুণ্ডে ছিল তার সহশ্রেক মাথা ॥

নির্ম্মাইলেন প্রেম হংসের বাতাসে । আসন করিয়া প্রভু মনের হরিষে ॥

জলেতে ডুবিল হংস আহার কারণে । কিছু না পাইয়া উঠে প্রভু সন্নিধানে ॥

গরল মুখের বিন্দু থাকে মস্তকের দেশে ।

নাগের নিশাস কৈল ভাটার জোয়ার ॥ রাত্র দিন সঞ্চিলেন অনার দয়িতার ॥

তাহার উপরে রুধির প্রকাশ ।

দ্বিজ মুরতি কৈল আড়ম্ব কৈলাস ॥

যোগেতে মঙ্গল সৃজিলেন ভূদ্বীভার । অনন্ত কোটীদিগের কে করে বিচার ॥

কে করিতে পারে প্রভু আদ্যের জ্ঞেয়ান । ঘটে আসি পূজা লও স্বরূপনারাণ ॥

হীন নয় জন্ম মোর জাতির নাহি স্থিতি ।

লহ লহ জল পুষ্প যুগের যুগপতি ॥

গাছের বাকল নহি পত্রে নহি ছায়া ।

আগে ভাগে নিরঞ্জন নির্ম্মাইলেন কায়া ॥

তাহার ভকতে প্রভু করিলেন তার ।

বিষ্ণুর কারণে ভ্রমেন নৈরাকার ॥

আগেতে ছিলেন প্রভু ললিত অবতার ।

তিন রূপ হইলেন ভ্রমিলেন সংসার ॥

তবেতো ভ্রমণ কৈল পশ্চিম মুরতি ।

দক্ষিণে ভ্রমণ কৈল পূর্বেই আইলেন স্থিতি ।

অঙ্গে হাত বুলাইতে সৃজিলেন পার্বতী ।

দেখিতে সুন্দররূপ মনোহর জ্যোতি ॥

টলিল ধর্ম্মের বিন্দু দেবী নিল করে ।

ধর্ম্ম সমরিয়া মাতা পুরিল উদরে ॥

তিল প্রমাণ হৈয়া গড়িল বহুমতি ।

দিনে দিনে পার্বতীর বাড়িল উদর ॥

চলিতে শক্তি নাহি যুড়ে দুই কর ।

কে জন্মিল বলিয়া বলেন যজ্ঞেশ্বর ॥

ব্রহ্মভালু দিয়া হৈল ব্রহ্মের জনম ।

ব্রহ্মজালে বিষ্ণুর দহিছে তখন ॥

কীণকটি কুপিল কুমণ্ডল লৈয়া ।

হাতে বিষ্ণুর জন্ম হৈল কর্ণমূল দিয়া ॥

মনেতে বিচারি ত্রিদশেশ্বর ।

জীবত্রি শীতল কৈল ভূমিষ্ঠ মহেশ্বর ॥

তিনবার জনমিল এইতো উদরে ।

অপার মহিমা লীলা কে বুঝিতে পারে ॥

ধর্মের মঙ্গল গীত পণ্ডিত রামাই গান ।

একল রামাই দ্বিজ শয়ল অবধান ॥”

I will not attempt a translation, because these Bengali *mantras* have not been found in any MSS. They have been taken down from the mouths of ignorant, illiterate, and low-born priests of Dharma, who themselves do not know the meaning. Dharma is here called Yugapati, Lord of the Yuga. In Nepal I have heard even Hindus say that this is Buddha's *pāḍā*, reign because the next *avatāra* Kalki has not yet come. The Buddhists consider Adi Buddha represented in the *stūpas* as the Lord of time.

যে দিনেতে ভৃগুভার আছিল মণ্ডলে ।

বাসুকি নাগের জন্ম হৈল সেই কালে ॥

That is, in the Mandala or circle (representing *Āṇiyatā*) there manifested itself a bee, the Adibuddha. The serpent lord *Vāsuki* was born at the same time.

The *Nāgas* play an important part in Buddhism and especially in later Buddhism. They are almost coeval with Adibuddha, because *Nāga* is the *A'sana* or seat of one of the *Dhyāni* Buddhas, namely, *Amoghasiddha*.

Dharma created *Pārvati*, the *Adyā Śakti*, of the Hindus. While she is the *Primæval Power*, Dharma is called *Anādya*, without a beginning. *Pārvati* conceived through the grace of Dharma and gave birth to *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, and *Mahādeva*.

By this formula, apparently Dharma is worshiped in the form of an earthen pot full of water; for it is stated;—

কে করিতে পারে প্রভু আদ্যের গোয়ান

ঘটে আসি পূজা লগ্ন স্বরূপ নারায়ণ ।

“Who can form an idea of the Lord, the beginning of all things? O one who is Nārāyaṇa in your own form come to this earthen pot and accept my worship.”

THE FORMULA FOR BATHING

The Formula for bathing the deity is curious :—

“ওঁ হারতি ভারতি গঙ্গা যমুনা চ সরস্বতী । সরস্বাৎ গণ্ডকী পুণ্যা শ্বেতগঙ্গা কৌশিকী ॥
ভোগবতী চ পাতালে স্বর্গে মন্দাকিনী তথা । সদা স্নয় মনোভূত্বা ভূত্বাটৈ ॥
জল লইয়া স্নান করেন ধর্ম্ম আগম জলে । অথগু তুলসীপত্র দিয়া পদতলে ॥
অভিগঙ্গা চূড়ামণি করেন ভকতি । তুরিতে যে স্নান লেন গৌসাত্রিঃ যুবতী ॥
টোলসমুদ্র এল গৌসাত্রিঃ ক্ষীরনদী । গঙ্গা যমুনা এল বসন্ত বদরী ॥
শোভাধাত্রীগণ এল হোয়ে এক স্থানে । স্নান করেন প্রভু ভগবানে ॥
স্নান আচলিত গীত পণ্ডিত রামাই গান । একল রামাই দ্বিজ শয়ল অবধান ॥

This also cannot in the present state of our knowledge of this worship be translated. All the different rivers came together and fell into the Dholsamudra, meaning the broad sea, literally, the sea like a drum, for bathing God Dharma.

HE ABUSES SACRIFICES.

Here is an instance of the immense power of Dharma.

ওঁ বোল সহস্র গতি লয়ে শ্রীরামাই পণ্ডিত ধর্ম্মপূজা করিবারে যান ।
সেই পথ দিয়া ঋষি মুনি মার্কণ্ড যান
ধূপে ধূনায় ধর্ম্মঘর দেখিবারে পান ॥
কহেন মার্কণ্ড মুনি, শুন হে কপিল মুনি,
কিসের শুনি জয় জয় কার ।
বলে মিথ্যাই আলম চাঁদা, মিথ্যাই বাজনা বাজে মিথ্যাই ধর্ম্ম উজল ।

This refers to Buddha. In later times the followers of Buddha resented if Buddha was called বেদনিষাকারী, an abuser of the Vedas. They called him the abuser of Sacrifices. Rāmacandra Kavibhārati says—

যতক্ষণতত্ত্বজ্ঞানবিধিঃ বেদে'পি তং নিন্দসি
 ত্রৈলোক্যে প্রাচ্যন্তামতঃ সত্বকরণে স্তুতৌ মন্ত্রান্নাপরঃ ।
 এব তে যুগসম্পদা ন বিদয়া যুক্তৈরন্যাত্মনা
 তে মূঢ়া প্রলপন্তি কলং স্তুগতৌ মদ্বৈদনিন্দীত্বয়ং ॥

He abused that part of the Vedas which enjoined sacrifices and not *My* Vedas.

HE IS RESPECTED IN CEYLON.

I will here quote a passage from Rāmāi Pandit's *Dharmapūjāpaddhati* or *Dharmapurāṇa*, a portion of which I have succeeded in obtaining after a good deal of trouble in manuscript.

আদ্য ভূপতি নিমাব দেহারা ধর্ম্যথ আদিস্থান
 নবখণ্ড পৃথিবী ঠেকেছে মেদিনী
 ত্রীধর্ম দেবতা সিংহলে বহুত সম্মান ।

“The primordial king has his image at Nimāva (a proper name?), the original place of Dharma worship. The earth divided into nine parts has gone to the end of the world. In Ceylon the God Dharma is greatly respected.”

This is indeed a very strong indication of Dharma being Buddha, because he is very much respected in Ceylon.

THE GODDESS OF SMALL-POX ALWAYS ACCOMPANIES DHARMA.

In many of the temples of Dharma the image of Çtālā, the goddess of small-pox, holds a prominent place. In the Dharma temples of Calcutta, Çtālā's image is bigger than that of Dharma but placed below his. In Nepāl many of the places

sacred to Buddha, have the temple of Hārīti, the Goddess of small-pox, at the entrance. In Svayambhū Ksetra Hārīti's temple at the north-western corner of the Stūpa is the second prominent object to be seen. At the Simha Sārthavāha Vihāra in the city of Khātmandu the temple of Hārīti is on the right side of the entrance. In the Brhat-Svayambhū-purāna it is said that no Vihāra should be without Hārīti. I quote the verses from the Brhat Svayambhū Purāna, page 428.

ततश्च हारतीं देवीं पञ्चपुत्रशतैवताम्
 श्रीस्वयम्भूपश्चिमाग्रे दक्षिणाग्रं संस्थापितं ।
 ये च या वा मनुष्याश्च पञ्चोपचारकैरपि
 मयधारादिभि पूज्यैः सांसेर्वलिभिर्मौनकैः ॥
 लेह्यै-पेयैः खानैः पानैः भक्तपिण्डाभ्यां पूजितम्
 तस्याः पुण्यप्रसादाच्च न जातु ईत्युपद्रवान् ॥
 इति ज्ञात्वा च मानुष्या तस्याः सेवां सदाकृतात्
 सदा ये या मनुष्याश्च नीरोगीपदलभ्यते ॥
 अन्नजा अन्यजा लोकाः शैवापि बौद्धशेवकाः
 हारीत्यामपि यक्षिण्यां सदा मुदा प्रपूजितम् ॥
 अथवा न्यत्रजाश्च बौद्धाद्यापि सेवाकृतं
 हारीत्याश्च मुदेव्याश्च सदा च मानितं मुदा ॥
 सर्वेषामपि बौद्धानां वह्निर्विहारे आश्रमे
 अतोतबुद्धस्याग्नया सदाविघ्नान् सुरजितम् ।
 इत्येवञ्च प्रकारेण स्वयम्भोश्च प्रभावतः
 हारीत्या किल देवाश्च अन्नकिञ्च न लक्षितम् ॥

" Then he established the goddess Hārītī with her five hundred children, with her face to the south in an extremity of the western side. There will be no danger from *iṣṭi* on account of the merits of the man who worships her with the five articles of worship, with a stream of wine, with meat, sacrifices and fish, with things to be licked, to be drunk, and to be eaten. Knowing that this people worshipped her always, they obtained the position of Nirogī men (of men in perfect health). The people of Nepal and so, that of the other countries, the followers of Çiva and of Buddha, always worship the Yaksini named Hārītī with delight. People from other countries, even Bauddhas worshipped and honoured the good Goddess Hārītī."

On account of the order of the past Buddhas she keeps out all molestations, having her seat outside the Vihāra or Aṣrama. Thus owing to the power of svayambhū what is there not found in Hārītī?

Hārītī is a Yaksini. It is difficult to ascertain whether Hindus have taken Çitalā from the Buddhistic Hārītī or the Buddhists from the Hindu Çitalā. I am inclined to think that Hindus are the borrowers, because they always call her a goddess and a form of Kālī, but the Buddhists call her a Yaksini.

LIME AS AN OFFERING.

Votive offerings are the life and soul of Dharma worship. At the celebrated temple of Dharma at Maynāgarh 13 or 14 miles from Tamluk in a south-westerly direction, people offer lime to the deity in order to be cured of white leprosy. This is not a custom among the Hindus. But in Nepāl and at the Svayambhūksetra lime is often offered. At the neck of the Svayambhū Chaitya where the Torana begins, lime is placed by the votaries and lime washed by the rain smears the mound. At Agnipura to the north-west of the mound, lime in small quantities is offered. Agnipura is said to be a hole in the earth but it has been filled up with lime. The small mound of lime above ground is supported by a stone slab on the west. The shape of the slab is like that of one containing an inscription but its eastern face i.e., the smooth face, is covered up by the lime mound.

LOKECVARA AT MAYNÁ.

There is a temple at Mayná in which there is an image of Káli with four hands and a phallic emblem of Çiva named Lokesvara. Lokesvara is the name of Padmapáni, and he may have any number of hands. I suspect that Káli is the Lokesvara, and the phallic emblem a different thing. In many temples while appropriating Buddhist images to Hindu use the sex is not much taken into account, specially if the images are dressed. The Lokesvara raises a strong presumption of the Buddhist origin of the temple in the neighbourhood of a deity who is most likely a Buddhist one.

ÇAMKHA OR SAMGHA.

There is a tradition at Mayná that in ancient times three things rose out of a tank in the fort. These three things are Dharma, a piece of stone, and a Çamkha; the last two have disappeared, Dharma only remains. In many Buddhist holy places Dharma is represented by a chaitya with shrines of five Dhyáni Buddhas around it. The shape of the image of Dharma at Mayná, as my assistant reports, is like the shape of a tortoise. That is the shape of a Stupa or a Chaitya. It has the legs and the head, these five things representing the five shrines of the five Dhyáni Buddhas. So at Mayná the Dharma alone is left behind, while Çamkha or the Samgha has disappeared. The Samgha is represented by a Bodhisattva; and Lokeçvara as a Bodhisattva. In many temples, he takes the place of Samgha. May we not suppose that of the three things two are in the Hindu temple (the phallic emblem representing the stone, and Káli representing the Çamkha) and one, the most prominent, is in the Dharma temple? It is not possible to say how the Dharma Buddha, and Samgha have been transformed into Dharma, a stone and Lokeçvar or Káli. The transformation and the supposed disappearance are significant.

THE POSITION OF BRÁHMANAS IN THE DHARMA WORSHIP.

The Bráhmāna holds a unique position in Dharma worship. The priests of Dharma are universally low caste people, but they never oppose Bráhmanas

worshipping their deity. The Bráhmāna can any time enter a Dharma temple and perform the Pújā. In the neighbourhood of Bráhmāna settlements, Dharma has two priests ; a Bráhmāna, not very high in the caste, offers votive offerings of the Bráhmanas ; and a low caste man performs the daily or periodical worship and presents the offerings of other castes. In some places the family of the low caste man being extinct and the place having a large revenue from votive offerings the Bráhmāna priest has made the temple his own. He does not himself conduct the worship but employs an ignorant Bráhmāna who worships Dharma as Çiva. I have seen such a place. The low caste people come and present their offerings, if these are objectionable from a Bráhmanic point of view, from behind. Thus the Bráhmāns are gradually encroaching upon the patrimony of Dharma.

The Buddhists always respected Bráhmanas though the latter always shunned them. At Svayambhūksetra Bráhmanas enjoy the privilege of worshipping and touching the deity. The Buddhist priesthood in Nepal is now confined to the Bándās and the higher offices to the Gubhájus, the highest section of the Bándās. No man can be a Bándā unless he is a born Bándā, and none a Gubhájú unless he is a born Gubhájú. But if they can procure a Bráhmāna boy to be a Bándā or even a Gubhájú they will gladly admit him.

THE CALCUTTA TEMPLE ; 45, JAUN BAZAR STREET.

GANECA AND MAHA'KA'L.

The Calcutta temple of Dharma, situated at the premises No. 45 Jaun Bazar Street contains six prominent images namely Dharma on a simhāsana, with his conspicuous eyes and his tapering head representing the light of the Adi Buddha. This is a miniature of the chaitya. Below the simhāsana are big images of Ganeça and Pancánand who is regarded as a form of Mahádeva. Below these is a stone with eruptions representing small-pox. This is Çitalá. There are Sasthi, the goddess of procreation, and Jvarásura, the demon of fever, also to be found in the room. I have already explained how Çitalá or Hártili is a

constant companion of Dharma in Nepal. Ganeṣa and Mahākāla are regarded as Dvāradevas, the Gods at the door of Dharma (see page 196 Vol. II Dr. Oldfield's Sketches from Nepāl). There are two Ganeṣas at the two roads leading to the Svāyambhū and the images of Mahākāla are to be found in every Buddhist temple in Nepal.

There is something very curious in the Calcutta temple. Just below the image of Ganeṣa and just above that of the Ćitalā, there are three regular shaped stones forming one object, the middle one being smaller than the other two. They are now decked with brass or silver nail-heads fastened on the stones with wax. But the object is no part of Ćitalā. My guide could not say anything about this object. But one is led to suspect that this is the ancient representation of Dharma, Saṃgha, and Buddha in one piece of stone. This representation is very ancient,—much older than the present form of Buddhism in Nepal. The object is so much besmeared with vermilion that it is impossible to see the stone without careful washing. I suspect that the Calcutta temple is a very old one and represents a very ancient state of religion in this part of the country. The temple building is new, having been erected in the Bengal year 1300 by Hari Mohan De, who treats the visitors with great courtesy and is anxious to explain the meaning of everything found in the temple.

CREATION OUT OF NOTHING.

I have got a portion of Rāmāi Pandit's Paddhati. Like many good Buddhist works it begins without an invocation. One part begins শ্রীশ্রীধর্মায় নমঃ । অথ শৃণু পুরাণ লিখাতে । The whole thing is in Bengali. Its Buddhist character is manifest from this heading. It means that a Purāṇa is now to be written which creates everything from Ćūnya. I quote a few lines from the beginning.

নাই রেক নাই রূপ নাই ছিল বর্ণ চিহ্ন ।	রবি শশী নাই ছিল নাই রাত্রি দিন ॥
নাই ছিল জল স্থল নাই ছিল আকাশ ।	মেরু মন্দার না ছিল না ছিল কৈলাস ॥
দেবতা দেহারা নাই পূজিবার দেহ ।	মহাশূন্য মধ্যে প্রভুর আর আছে কেহ ॥

ঋষি যে তপস্বী নাই নাহিক ত্রাস্ত্রাণ ।
পুণ্য স্থল নাই ছিল নাই গঙ্গাজল ।
নাই সৃষ্টি ছিল আর নাই স্রব নর ।
বার ত্রত না ছিল ঋষি যে তপস্বী
প্রয়াগ মাধব নাই কি করি বিচার ।
দশ দিকপাল নাই মেঘ তারাগণ ।
চারি বেদ নাই ছিল শাস্ত্রের বিচার ।

পর্বত পাহাড় নাই নাহিক স্বাবর জঙ্গম ॥
মাগরসঙ্গম নাই দেবতা সকল ॥
ত্রাস্ত্রা বিষ্ণু না ছিল না ছিল আধার ॥
তীর্থ স্থল নাহি ছিল গয়া বারাণসী ॥
স্বর্গ মর্ত্য নাই ছিল সব ধুকুকার ॥
আয়ু মৃত্যু নাই ছিল যমের তাড়ন ॥
গুপ্ত বেদ করিলেন প্রভু করতার ॥

* * * *

শ্রীধর্মচরণারবিন্দ করিয়া প্রণতি ।

শ্রীযুত রামাই কয় শুন রে ভারতী ॥”

“ There was no line, no form, no colour, no mark ; neither the sun nor the moon ; neither day nor night ; neither water nor land, nor the skies ; neither Meru nor Mandāra, nor Kailās ; neither gods, nor images, nor any form to worship. Who is there in the immense void (dear) to the Lord ? Neither any devotee nor any ascetic nor any Brāhmana ; no mountain, nor hill, n othing animate or inanimate. There was no sacred place, nor Ganges water, nor confluence of seas and rivers, nor any god. There was neither any creation, nor any god nor any man ; no Brahmá, nor Visnu nor any receptacle. There was no sacred day nor sacred ceremonies, nor any devotee, nor any ascetic. There were no holy places, neither Gayá, nor Benares, nor Prayág, nor Mádhava. What is there to discriminate ? There was neither heaven nor earth. All was a wide waste of void. The Lords of the ten quarters did not exist, neither the clouds nor the stars. There was neither life, nor death, nor the oppressions of Pluto. The four Vedas did not exist, nor disputations about Çastras. The Lord the creator made a secret Veda. * * * * Making obeisance to the feet of Dharma, Rámái says, hear my words.”

This is an emphatic and downright denial of the existence of anything before creation i.e., an emphatic and downright denial of the Hindu theory of

creation. All the different schools of Hindu philosophy agree in saying that there is or are one or more eternal entities. But this new creed denies the existence of any such thing, and in doing so it discloses a close affinity to the later form of Buddhism—the religion taught in the *Páramitás*.

One may suspect that in the passage cited above there is the *Prabhu*, Lord, who appears to be an eternal entity. But what is the *Prabhu*? It has already been shown that he also is *Çunya-múrti*. (See *supra*).

The following is from a priest at Ghántal :—

স্বর্গ মর্ত্য না ছিল না ছিল যে পাতাল ।	উৎপত্তি না ছিল না ছিল যম কাল ॥
দেবা দেবী গুরু শিষ্য কেহ না ছিল ।	নীল অনীল ধর্ম জন্ম যে লভিল ॥
ধর্মকে বাপে না দিলেন জন্ম ।	
মায়ে না দিলেন উদরে ঠাই ।	শূন্যভরে জন্মিলেন অনাদ্য গোঁসাই ॥
নিরঞ্জন নৈরাকার বুদ্ধিতে না পারি ।	আপনি করিলেন কভু আপনার কায় ॥
হস্ত পদ স্বক চক্ষু নিরঞ্জনের হইল ।	নয়ন মিলাইয়া তিনি দৃষ্টি মিলাইল ॥
দেখিলেন নবখণ্ড ব্রহ্মা অগ্নিময় ।	তস্মাৎ দেব নিরঞ্জনায়ে নম ॥”

“There was neither heaven nor earth nor the nether regions. There was no birth, no death. Neither gods nor goddesses nor teachers nor pupils. Dharma, the blue and the not-blue was born. A father did not beget him. A mother did not give him a place in her womb. The beginningless holy person was born in the void. Spotless and formless he defied comprehension. The Lord created his own form. He got his hands, legs, and shoulders. He opened his eyes and saw. He saw the nine portions of the earth and the fiery form of Brahma. Therefore salutation to the spotless.”

RA'MA'I PANDIT.

The name of Rámái Pandit occurs very often in the above. He made the Paddhati in Bengali. A portion of the Paddhati in manuscript is in my possession.

Long metrical pieces of his composition have been obtained from Maynā, (see supra) at the end of which occurs the significant line; একল রামাই পণ্ডিত শতরাজবান; "one Rāmāi Pandit is to be regarded as one hundred." He seems to have moulded some pre-existing form of religion most likely a form of the Buddhist religion, current amongst his countrymen, into its present shape and prepared its liturgy in the vernacular. Ghanarām in his Dharmamangal says that Rāmāi was a Baiti by caste, that he lived by the side of a river at a place named Cāmpāi, that he was regarded even in Dharma Pala's time as a great Saint, and that it was at his hermitage that Ranjāvatī obtained a boon which led to the birth of her son Lāusen, the great propagandist of Dharma religion. But it is doubtful whether everything that goes in the name of Rāmāi is really his composition. For in one place he distinctly makes mention of the Musalmans and their religion. More thorough investigation might bring new facts to light, but his position as the head of the Bengal Dharma cult will never be denied.

WHAT IS DHARMA ?

In the previous paragraphs an attempt, however imperfect, has been made to identify Dharma worship with the Bauddha religion. It has been shown that the followers of Dharma equally with the followers of Buddha believe that the world sprang from non-existence. It has been shown that the all-seeing eyes are prominent things both in the images of Dharma and in the Chaityas of the Buddhists. It has been shown that like Buddhism in Nepal the Dharma worshippers have admitted Gaṇeṣa, Mahakālā or Pañcānanda and Cītalā into their pantheon. Many minor identities have also been pointed out. But an objector might now say, all this might be quite true ; but if Dharma worship were really Buddhism why should it have a new name ? This may be answered by saying that Dharma is not a name new to the Buddhists. Dharma is the most prominent person or conception in the Buddhist trinity. He used to be represented by the most prominent object in a Buddhist neighbourhood *vis.* the Chaitya, or Stūpa rising from two or three to two hundred or three hundred feet above the level

of the ground. The Nepalese perambulate the Chaitya, but worship the various Dhyāni Buddhas who have their places assigned in niches around this huge mass of brick or stone. But there are no niches in the Tibetan Stūpas. There they perambulate and worship this huge object. In Nepal Śākyā Muni is regarded as Vyāsa, one who has simply recorded the Buddhist tradition. His figure is prominent in the Vihāras where monks used to live in ancient time and where the Bāndās or priests now live. But in the greatest places of Buddhist worship *viz.* the Svyambhū and the Māhābodha he is nowhere. The Saṃgha is generally represented by Padmapāni or Lokeśvara who has his shrines scattered all over Nepal. But he is not to be found in the Stūpa. So out of the three Buddha, and Saṃgha were placed in an inferior position and Dharma held a strikingly prominent position. It is no wonder that the ignorant Buddhist votaries should in the lapse of several centuries stick to Dharma and forget Buddha and Saṃgha. There is another reason why Buddhism should be known as Dharma worship. The Buddhists called their religion Saddharma or Dharma. They rarely, if ever, called their religion Bauddha Dharma. The Hindus called them Bauddhas and they called the Hindus Pāsandas. They called themselves Saddharmachintakāh. Under such circumstances, after the massacre of a large number of Buddhist priests and after the affiliation of the literate and wealthy classes among the lay Buddhists into various grades of Hindu castes, it is no wonder that the ignorant masses without intelligent guidance should forget their own traditions and form a new one according to their ignorant fancy.

THEIR ANTAGONISM TO THE BRĀHMANAS.

The worshippers of Dharma live in peace, and whatever their tenets may be they exhibit no hostile feeling to the Brāhmanas; and so some one may argue that as the Brāhmanas would not condescend to minister to the lower classes they allowed them to have their own priests. This is a matter of sufferance, and therefore the Dharma worship is only part of Hinduism, may be an excrescence. But a quotation from Rāmāi Pandit will settle this point and

show that the worshippers of Dharma often entertained very bitter feelings against the Brāhmanas and in some cases fraternised with the Musalmans.

ঐনিরঞ্জনের উদ্ভা।

-জাজপুর পুরু বাদি,
দক্ষিণা মাগিতে যায়,
দক্ষিণা মাগিতে যায়,
মালদহে নাগে কর,
বোলিষ্ঠ হইল বড়,
বেদে করে উচ্চারণ,
মনেতে পাইয়া মর্ষ,
এইরাগে দ্বিজগণ,
বৈকুণ্ঠে থাকিয়া ধর্ম্য,
ধর্ম্য হৈল্যা যবনরূপি,
চাঁপিয়া উত্তম হয়,
নিরঞ্জন নিরাধার,
যতেক দেবভাগণ,
জ্ঞান হৈল মহীশ্বর,
গণেশ হইয়া গাজি,
ডেজিয়া আসন তেক,
চন্দ্র সূর্য আদি দেবে
আপুনি চণ্ডিকা দেবি,
যতেক দেবভাগণ

সোল সয় ঘর বেদি, বেদি লয় কর্ণয় ঘন।
যার ঘরে নাঞি পায়, সাঁপ দিয়া পড়ায় ভুবন।
মালদহে নাগে কর দিনয় কর্ণয় ॥
যার ঘরে নাঞি পায়, সাঁপ দিয়া পড়ায় ভুবন।
না চিনে আপন পর, জালের নাঞিক দিশপাস।
দশ বিশ হয়্যা জোড়, সখর্ম্মিরে করএ বিনাশ ॥
বেয়ায় অগ্নি ঘনে ঘন, দেখিয়া সভাই কঙ্কমান।
সভে বলে রাখ ধর্ম্ম, তোমা বিনে কে করে পরিত্রাণ ॥
করে ছিষ্টি সংহারণ, এ বড় হৈইল অবিচার।
মনেতে পাইয়া মর্ষ, মায়াতে হইল অন্ধকার।
মাথায়েতে কাল টুপি, হাতে শোভে ত্রিরাচ কামান।
ত্রিভুবনে লাগে ভয়, খোদায় বলিয়া এক নাম ॥
হৈল্যা ভেস্ত অবতার, মুখেতে বলেন দম্ভদার।
সবে হয়্যা একমন, আনন্দেতে পরিল ইজার ॥
বিষ্ণু হৈল পেকাধর, আদম্ভ হৈল্যা শূলপাণি।
কার্ত্তিক হৈইল কাজি, ফকির হইল ব্রত মুনি ॥
নারদ হৈইল্যা শেক, পুরুন্দর হইল মৌলনা।
পদাভিক হয়্যা সবে, সবে বেলি বাজায় বাজনা ॥
তিই হৈল্যা ছায়া বিবি, পদাভিক হল্য বিবিন্দুর।
হয়্যা সবে একমন, প্রবেশ করিল জাজপুর ॥

দেউল দেহারা ভাঙ্গে,

কাড়্যা ফিড়্যা খায় রঙ্গে, পাখড় পাখড় বলে বোল ।

ধরিয়া ধর্মের পায়,

রামাঞ্জে পণ্ডিত গায় ই বড় বিষম গণ্ডগোল ॥

“ There are sixteen hundred families (of the Bráhmaṇas ?) in Jájpur. They go to different places demanding daksiná ; where they do not get any they pronounce their curse and thus burn the world. At Maldaha they levy a regular tax (the meanings of the words বাদি, বেদি, কর্ণধ্বজ, কর্ণধ্বজ are not known). They go demanding daksiná, where they don't get any, they pronounce their curse and thus burn the world. At Maldaha they levy a regular tax upon all without distinction. There is no end of their knavery. They have grown very strong ; ten to twenty come together and destroy the worshippers of Dharma. They pronounce the Vedas, fire issues forth incessantly, everyone trembles before them. Knowing fully the secret, people say, O Dharma, protect us. Who is there other than yourself that can rescue us ? Thus do the Bráhmaṇas destroy the creation. This is burning injustice. Dharma from his seat in the Vaikuntha knew all this in his mind. He produced illusion and produced darkness. He assumed the form of Yavana, wore a black cap on his head with Triruc (kámán ?) in hand. Riding on an excellent horse which frightens the three worlds, he assumed a name, Khoda. The spotless and formless was born in the flesh in heaven and began to cry Dam-madár (a Musalman term used at the ceremony of raising the flagstaff). All the gods with one accord wore the ijára (or pantaloons) with great delight. Brahmá became Muhammad ; Visnu, Pegamver ; and Çiva, Adam ; Ganeça became a Gázi. Kártika became a Cází. The Munis became Fakirs. Throwing away his proper vestment Nárada became a Sheik. Indra became Maulána. The sun, the moon, and the other gods became foot-soldiers, and all began to play martial music. Candiká transformed herself into Eve. Padmávali became Bibi Nur. All the gods with one accord entered Jájpur, broke the temples and images of Gods and cried ‘ Pakḍo, Pakḍo.’ Holding the feet of Dharma with his hand Rámái Pandit says, ‘ This is a terrible calamity.’ ”

The city of Jájpur mentioned here is certainly not the capital of Utkala, but

is likely to be a city of that name in the Ráda country, mentioned in Mánikcandra Ganguli's work as a well known seat of Dharma worship. It appears that when the Muhammadans entered Jájpur, the worshippers of Dharma, exasperated with the high-handed proceedings of the Bráhmanas, made common cause with them.

With the materials obtained up to this time, I humbly believe a case has been made out for considering the worshippers of Dharma to be the ancient Buddhists of India. If further investigation confirms my views, a very large proportion of the population of Bengal will have to be taken out from the list of Hindus and put down under the head of Buddhists. The Census of India will have to be considerably modified, and the theory that Buddhism has been swept away from the soil of India will have to be given up. Some idea of the number of Dharmá worshippers may be formed from the fact that almost in every village in Central and Western Bengal there are some places dedicated to Dharma where all the low but numerous castes resort for worship. Most of these castes get no Bráhmans to minister to them, and therefore form no part of the Hindu population. But here arises a difficulty in determining the places of Dharma worship, because Dharma is worshipped under various names, and some of these thákurs have already been included in the Hindu pantheon as one of the various forms of either Çiva or Visnu. I take from Mánik Ganguli's work a short list of these different names in his neighbourhood:—

প্রথমে বন্দিব জয় জয় পরাংপর, স্থানে স্থানে মূর্ত্তিভেদ মহিমা বিস্তার ॥
বেলাভিদায় বাঁকুড়া রায়ে বন্দি এক মনে । অসংখ্য প্রগতি শীতলসিংহের চরণে ॥
কুল্লরের কতে সিং বৈতলের বাঁকুড়ারায় । শুদ্ধভাবে বন্দি দৌহে নত হয়ে কায় ॥
পাণ্ডুগ্রামের বুড়া ধর্ম্মে বন্দিয়া সাদরে । শ্যামবাজারের দলুরায়ে দিয়ে জয় জয়কারে ॥
দেপুর্নে জগৎরায়ে জোড় করি কর । গোপালপুরের কাঁকড়াবিছায় বন্দি তারপর ॥
সিরাসের কালাচাঁদে ঐন্দ্রদাসের বাঁকুড়ারায় । বন্দিব বিস্তার নতি করে নত কায় ॥
গোপুর্নের স্বরূপনারায়ণ স্বর্ণসিংহাসনে । বন্দিয়া বন্দিব মঙ্গলপুরের রূপনারাণে ॥

পশ্চিম পাড়ার বাত্রাসিদ্ধি বন্দিয়া তাঁহায়। বড়ুজা গ্রামের বন্দিব মোহনরায় ॥
 গুছুড়া গ্রামের বন্দি শীতলনারাণে । আলগুড়চিমার খুদিরায়ে বন্দি সাবধানে ॥
 আকুটিকুল্লার মাল্লার ধর্ম্মের করিয়া স্তবন, বন্দিপুরের শ্যামরায়ে বন্দিয়া চরণ ॥
 জাড়াগ্রামে কালুরায়ে কামিষ্ঠা সহিত । জাজপুরে দেহারে বন্দি দার্য্য করি চিত ॥

“ I will first salute the Great of the Great whose forms are different in different localities. I will salute Bákudá Ráya at Beldihá. Numberless salutations to the feet of Čítala Sinha, to Fateh Sinha of Fullara, and Bákudá Ray of Vaitala. With a pure heart I bow to these, with my body bent I will salute with honour the Budá Dharma of Pándugráma, and cry victory to Dalu Ráy of Syámbazar. I join my palms before Jagat Ráya of Deypur, and I salute the Kankdabicha of Gopalpur, to Kálácand of Siyás and Bákudá Ráya of Indás. I will salute Svarupa Nárán of Gopur on his golden throne, and Rúp Nárán of Mangalpur, Yátrá Siddhi of Paçcimpádá, and Mohan Ráy of Bađuja, Sital Nárán of Guchuđa, Khudiram of Allguđacinna. I will pray to Mállára Dharma of Akhutikulla and touch the feet of Syáma Ráya at Bandipur. I salute Kálu Ráy of Jáđá with his female companion Kámini, and I salute with a steadfast mind the image at Jájpur.”

The diversity of names is infinite. But with a little care a census of the followers of Dharma may be taken. The population will be considerable, nay, several millions.
